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optional manual dispatch areas 28, also shown in phantom. As will be explained in more detail below, the dispatch system 20 automatically dispatches the trays of sorted letters to conventional ERMC or similar USPS rolling stock.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 14 of page 9 with the following rewritten paragraph:

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Various alternatives are possible. For example, rather than vertically transporting containers from the spur to a subjacent cart, it is within the scope of the invention to elevate the cart with respect to the spur and transfer containers directly from the spur to the cart. While such configuration may reduce cycle time, it results in an overall increase in the height of the system. This embodiment may be desirable where ceiling height is not a significant factor.

In the claims:

Please amend claims 1, 3-16, 19-21, and 23-30 as follows:

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1. (Amended) A postal dispatch system
which dispatches randomly arranged containers of sorted mail to particular dispatch carts, comprising:
a sortation conveyor having a main line defined by a conveying surface, a plurality of spurs extending from said mail line and a diverter mechanism at each of said spurs which selectively diverts containers from said conveying surface onto the associated one of said spurs; and at least one transport mechanism which transports containers from each of said spurs to a cart juxtaposed with that spur.

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3. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 2,
including another diverter mechanism which diverts containers from a feed line onto said conveying surface.

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4. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
wherein said at least one transport mechanism lowers containers
from each of said spurs to a subjacent cart associated with that spur.
5. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
wherein said at least one transport mechanism includes a plurality of
stationary transport mechanisms, one associated with each of said spurs.
6. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
wherein said at least one transport mechanism travels between plural
ones of said spurs.
7. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
wherein said at least one transport mechanism raises a subjacent cart
associated with that spur to the level of that spur and moves containers directly from
the spur to the cart.
8. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
wherein said transport mechanism includes an extendable support
member and a vertical lift, said extendable support member is
adapted to retrieving containers from said at least one of said spurs and inserting
containers to the associated cart and said vertical lift adapted to moving said support
member between the vertical level of said one of said spurs and the vertical level of
the associated cart.
9. (Amended) The system according to claim 8,
wherein said extendable support member includes a plurality of fingers which comb
between portions of said at least one of said spurs below containers supported on that
spur.

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10. (Amended) The system according to claim 9,
wherein said spur includes a conveying surface made up of a plurality of roller members
and wherein said fingers comb between said roller members.
11. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 9,
wherein said vertical lift elevates said fingers upwardly in order to
retrieve a container from said one of said spurs and elevates said
fingers downwardly in order to insert a container to the associated cart.
12. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 8,
wherein said extendable support member is extended according to a
controlled acceleration profile.
13. (Amended) The system according to claim 12,
wherein said extendable support member is extended by a variable frequency motor.
14. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 8,
wherein said vertical lift is servo controlled.
15. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
including a plurality of said transport mechanisms,
wherein each of said transport mechanisms is inhibited from operation when a cart
serviced by that transport mechanism is being replaced.
16. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 15,
wherein other transport mechanisms are not inhibited from operation
when one of said transport mechanisms is inhibited from operation.

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19. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
wherein each of said diverters is a pop-up diverter.

20. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
wherein said spurs are arranged on both sides of said conveying surface and wherein
each of said diverters is bidirectional.

21. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
including an alignment device positioned adjacent each of said carts
which aligns containers being inserted to the associated cart.

23. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 9,
wherein said fingers are extendable horizontally in order to engage a
container.

24. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 9,
wherein said extendable support member further includes a stripper member
extendable horizontally independently of said fingers in order to slide containers off of
said fingers.

25. (Twice Amended) The system according to claim 1,
including a plurality of cart areas each having an enclosure with a movable gate that
can be selectively opened to allow other carts in other cart areas to be loaded while
one cart is being removed.

26. (Amended) A method of dispatching randomly ordered containers of sorted mail to carts,
comprising:
sorting containers to particular locations, each associated with a cart; and transporting
containers between each of said particular locations and the associated cart.

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27. (Amended) The method according to claim 26,
wherein said transporting includes accumulating a layer of containers at a particular
location and transporting said layer between that location and the associated cart.
28. (Amended) The method according to claim 27,
wherein said accumulating a layer includes accumulating a row of containers at said
particular location, shifting the row of containers and accumulating another row of
containers at said particular location.
29. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 26,
wherein said sorting containers includes providing a sortation conveyor having a main
line defined by a conveying surface and a plurality of spurs positioned along said main
line and further includes diverting containers from said conveying surface to spurs at
said particular locations.
30. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 26,
wherein said transporting containers includes positioning an associated cart below the
associated location and causing relative movement between containers at the
particular location and the associated cart.

REMARKS

The recent Office Action was a restriction requirement requiring Applicants to choose between Group I claims including system claims 1-25 and Group II claims including method claims 26-31. Applicants hereby provisionally elect Group I claims, with traverse, to prosecute in the present application. The restriction requirement is traverse because the Group I and II claims are related as a system and corresponding method, which Applicants are entitled to prosecute in a single application. Withdrawal of the restriction requirement is requested.